

No. 104 Squadron (KX) Bomber Command - "R for Roger"
10/11 September 1944
Mission 20/ TGT - Castrop, Germany. Zone 6. (Area)
Formation - Middle 1/3.
Moon Phase: Crescent Moon

Crew:

Name	Rank	Position
Malcolm Fraser	Warrant Officer	Flight Engineer (Wnd)
Gerry Hansen (Lt Wnd-rec) - 1 Fw-190A5)	Flight SGT	Bomb Aimer (MB - Well Done Mission #2)
Jacob Morton Do-217N2, 1-Me-110 F4, 1-Ju-88C6)	Sergeant	Rear Gunner (1-Ju88c6, 2- ME-110 G4, 1-
Alfie "Binky" Williams	Pilot Officer	Navigator
Theodore "Teddy" Fernsby	Flying Officer	Pilot
Jeremiah "Jerry" MacKenzie Fw-190A5, 1-Me-110F-4, 1-Ju-88G7, 1-Ju-88G7)	Sergeant	Mid-Upper Gunner (2-Ju88c6, 2-Do-217, 1-
Oscar Addington 217J1, Me-110G3)	Flight SGT	Wireless Operator/Gunner (2nd Wnd) (Do-
Sidney Cartwright	Warrant Officer	Senior Erk

"The Mission to Castrop (Near Essen) ..."

From Teddy Fernsby's Personal Diary for Mission 20:

It was a Very Weird Mission tonight! Flying weather was good... just a crescent moon with about 50% cloud buildup over the Belgium coast line and then dropping off to clear conditions over the target. R for Roger was in the middle of the raid and with all the ground fighting in France, Jerry night fighter defenses were stretched thin... Takeoff went well. We linked up with the raid over Yarmouth and climbed to 20,000, feet, our attack altitude for the mission. It was a nice flying night and Jerry seemed to be busy elsewhere. We found the target ok, checked in with the Master Bomber and dropped our bombs on target. Getting a "Well Done" from the Master Bomber with 40% of our bombs on target, AA fire was non-existent and I turned "Roger" to the south to head for home. Our route took us to the north of Essen away from any know AA Gun positions... With the bombing done and the clear night flying condions, I must admit that I was lulled a bit by the droning of the engines. My mind was wandering back to that blonde-haired beauty that I had met on my last days off to London... Such a sweet thing...

Suddenly, SGT Jacob Morton, our Tail Gunner shouted on the intercomm that we had "a ball of fire" on our tail and to break to port NOW!"... That yanked me out of my reverie ... I thru Roger into a Port Corkscrew and then pulled out of a steep dive several thousand feet lower... I couldn't believe my eyes ... that "Ball of Fire" was standing still in front of us! How he got there or did that I had no idea. I thru Roger into another corkscrew... this time to the right ... When I got Roger leveled out again, I saw that we had the "Orange Fire Ball" sitting about 500 feet off the port wing tip pacing us at 9 O'Clock... It appeared to be globe shaped with a pulsing orange color that even when stationary I could not tell what it was. Then I heard the mid-upper Machineguns pounding and saw a string of tracer rounds converge on the orange ball. I swear... that orange ball "winked out" and then reappeared almost immediately in the 11 O'Clock position about 1000 yards out and still pacing us! The intercomm was bedlam! I yelled for SGT Jerry Mackenzie to cease firing and for everyone to quiet down... which they did.. Our "Fire Ball" friend stayed with us for about 15 minutes ... I tried some gentle maneuvers that the "Fire Ball" matched exactly just like it was flying in formation with us... As we neared the coast ... The "Fire Ball" circled us once and then did a right angle turn at 200 knots and then sped away to the north at what I would estimate as at least a 1000 MPH! We reported it to the Intel boys when we debriefed... A Jerry Super Weapon or one of those "Foo Fighters" we've heard whispers about??? The Intelligence Officer was interested but didn't say what he thought it was and he ordered us not to talk about it ... He said he would be "in Touch"!

Opening remarks from Group No-5's intel report.

Case 39 Investigation

11 Sep 44

At 0138 hours near Essen, Germany while returning from a night mission over Castrop, Germany FO Teddy Fernsby pilot of the RAF Lancaser Bomber "R for Roger" assigned to No. 104 Squadron and his crew were flying at 20,000 feet, about 50 miles from their target. The tail gunner alerted the pilot that they were being followed or chased by an "Orange Pulsing Fire Ball". It made violent acceleration and deceleration and swift jerky movements from side to side when the mid upper gunner fired his turret MGs at it.. The "Fire Ball" made no aggressive moves against the bomber. The pilot and crew will undergo further interrogations by intelligence officers with the N°5 Group Intelligence section back at Morton Hall.

Comments from N°5 Group's ongoing investigation of "rocket" phenomena sightings begun more than a year earlier.